RAJYA SABHA

Thursday, the 28th *July,* 2005/6 *Sravana,* 1927 *(Saka)*

The House met at eleven of the clock,

MR. CHAIRMAN in the Chair.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Doha Summit

*61. SHRI YASHWANT SINHA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a South Summit meeting was held at Doha in June, 2005;

(b) whether it is a fact that neither the Prime Minister nor the Minister of External Affairs attended this summit meeting; and

(c) whether as a result thereof India missed a great opportunity to promote its case for a permanent seat in the UNSC with the members of G-77?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) to (c) The Second South Summit was held in Doha from 15-16 June 2005. I had the privilege to lead the Indian delegation.

At the Summit in Doha, India's continued contribution to South-South cooperation was highlighted. The opportunity was also utilized by me for bilateral meetings with leaders of a large number of developing countries to mobilize support in favour of the G-4 Framework Resolution and India's candidature for permanent membership of the UN Security Council.

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA: Sir, while I am very happy that the hon. Minister of State had the privilege to lead the Indian delegation to the Second South Summit at Doha. I would like to begin my first supplementary by saying that diplomacy like Government is as much about protocol and hierarchy, as I said Government is. Now, I have nothing personal against the hon. Minister of State for External Affairs, but, if at a summit meeting

the Prime Minister of India, unfortunately, does not find time to go, and this is only the second summit, Sir, and even the Minister of External Affairs is too busy to go to a neighbouring place like Doha, then it raises questions, specially as I have said in my question, Sir, in the light of the very hard struggle in which we are engaged to get a permanent seat on the UN Security Council. Sir, this summit was preceded by a meeting of the Foreign Ministers of G-77. The occasion was utilised to have a meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the Non-aligned Movement. All these could have given us ample opportunity to canvass support for our case for a permanent membership. I know, Sir, that Pakistan was represented at this meeting by its Foreign Minister, Mr. Kasuri. I also note that they have lobbied hard on behalf of the Group called Uniting for Consensus for their own resolution which is absolutely opposed to our stand and our resolution, the G-4 Resolution. Now, therefore, I would like to know—the hon. Prime Minister is also here—as to why did we decide to devalue this G-77 Summit at Doha in the light of these developments.

SHRI E. AHAMMED: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Prime Minister had already communicated his inability to the Emir of Qatar as he had to be here to attend the Governors' Conference convened by the hon. President of India. The External Affairs Minister was also on a foreign tour for a very important discussion with one of the countries of G-5, Russia. Therefore, I had been authorised to represent the hon. Prime Minister in the South South as well as to represent the External Affairs Minister in the Non-aligned Foreign Ministers' Conference.

It is true there are countries that have their representations at various levels. There were Presidents, there were Deputy Prime Ministers, there were also Foreign Ministers and Deputy Foreign Ministers and I have been authorised to represent this country and I have done my duty, as far as possible, to the best of my ability and to the best of my experience and knowledge. I had also utilised this opportunity, with the help of my officers, to have 36 bilateral meetings with foreign delegations from Asia, Africa and Latin America; and we forcefully conveyed our rightful and just claim for a permanent seat in the Security Council. Apart from that, I also had the chance of meeting and discussing with other Heads of the State and the Government representatives of the 16 countries, and within the D-day I have done it. It does not mean that because there was no Foreign Minister and I could not do my duty. What Mr. Kasuri has done, I have

done much more than that. Of course, that is a different thing; I do not want to speak. I am, of course, a Minister of State. But a Minister of State also has the power and position under the Constitution which I have been utilising as I have been authorised by my Prime Minister. I have done my duty and if the hon. Member is very much particular to know which are the countries with whom I had bilateral meetings I can give it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: There is no need for it.

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA: Sir, this is an excellent reply that the hon. Minister has given and deservedly he has received clappings from the ruling benches. I recommend to the Prime Minister, who is present in this House, that he should be promoted to full Cabinet rank.

SHRI E. AHAMMED: I am not very keen on it.

SHRI VAYALAR RAVI: Let him be his best in the BJP.

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA: As I said in the beginning, if the hon. Minister of a State is sufficient, adequate to represent India at a Summit, then in all future summits this could be the general rule that we could follow. But it is not so. It is not so, Sir, I have the copy of the Press note which was issued and I know that the hon. Minister of State did work hard, he met a large number of visitors, participants or participating countries in the Summit. But it is not the same thing as the Prime Minister himself meeting them; it is not the same thing as the External Affairs Minister himself meeting them. If anyone in this House denies it, then, I say, I am sorry I do not share their view with all due regard and respect for the hon. Minister of State. My second question, Sir, which has already been partly referred to by the hon. Minister of State, is that, is it a fact that the hon. Minister of External Affairs could not attend the Doha summit because he accompanied the Chairperson of the UPA to Moscow on the same dates and that he preferred the Moscow visit? Moscow, incidentally has repeatedly said no to the G-4 Resolution. He decided to accompany the UPA Chairperson to Moscow and there have been a flurry of high-level visits to Moscow rather than attend the Doha Summit. Is it so?

SHRI E. AHAMMED: Sir, I really appreciate the hon. Member's concern that the representation should be at the high level. But at the very same time, the hon. Minister for External Affairs's visit to Moscow was also very important because Moscow is also one of the G-5 countries and he will have to have exchange of views even at this...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA: Which is not supporting you.

SHRI E. AHAMMED: Let me finish my sentence. Sir, I would like to bring to the notice of this House that in the first South Summit Conference, no Prime Minister could go, no Minister could go. Only Dr. Murli Manohar Joshi had been authorised by the then Prime Minister to attend it. This time I am authorised. This is something happening. This is nothing new for the Government.

I just would like to say that whatever is entrusted to any Minister, he has been diligently and responsibly attending to that work. You should not just read more than that as to why the Foreign Minister could not go, etc. The Foreign Minister had gone to Russia because it was also an important country for us and we have strategic and other relations with Russia and we should strengthen them. And, at the same time, we could not postpone them as well. Therefore, I had attended to my duty.

SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Sir, India, being the largest democracy in this world, is very eager to play a role in the international affairs. Recently, the hon. Prime Minister visited the U.S. During the visit it appears that he did not make any forward move on India's claim of becoming a permanent Member of the U.N. Security Council. I would like to know from the hon. Minister—the hon. Prime Minister is also sitting here—whether he has raised the issue of India's claim of UN Security Council Seat in his discussions with Bush administration and what was the reaction of the Bush administration in this regard.

SHRI VAYALAR RAVI: Sir, this is not within the purview of the main question...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: This is pertaining to UN Security Council...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: No, no...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI VAYALAR RAVI: No, no...(*Interruptions*)...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please take your seat.

SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: If the hon. Minister does not want to reply to my supplementary, it is okay.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Minister, would you like to say something?

SHRI E. AHAMMED: Sir, I was not there to discuss with Bush administration. My work was to attend the Doha Summit...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: I did not say that you had gone to discuss with Bush administration. It is pertaining to your senior Minister...(*Interruptions*)...

DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR: As the Minister of State for External Affairs, he should have the information with him...(*Interruptions*)...It is unfair...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Sir, it is a very important question and the entire nation wants to know about it.

DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR: Yes. The Members would like to know about it...(*Interruptions*)...Hon. Prime Minister is sitting here. He should reply...(*Interruptions*)...

MR. CHAIRMAN: If the hon. Minister would like to reply, he can reply...(*Interruptions*)...Please take your seat. Now, Question No. 62.

अंटार्कटिका के लिए अनुसंधान दल

*62. **प्रो॰ रामबख्श सिंह वर्मा:**
श्री प्यारे लाल खंडेलवाल:†

क्या विज्ञान और प्रौद्योगिकी मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या यह सच है कि सरकार द्वारा अंटार्कटिका पर शोध कार्य हेतु भारतीय वैज्ञानिकों का एक दल भेजा जा रहा है;

(ख) यदि हां, तो तत्संबंधी ब्यौरा क्या है;

(ग) भारतीय वैज्ञानिकों द्वारा अंटार्कटिका में किस विषय पर शोध कार्य किया जाएगा; और

(घ) यह कार्य कब तक पूरा हो जाएगा?

विज्ञान और प्रौद्योगिकी मंत्रालय के राज्य मंत्री (श्री कपिल सिब्बल): (क) और (ख) जी हां, । भारत सरकार 1981 से प्रति वर्ष अंटार्कटिक में वैज्ञानिक अभियान दल भेज रहा है। अब तक ऐसे 24 अभियान सफलतापूर्वक भेजे जा चुके हैं। प्रत्येक वर्ष ये अभियान किराए के जलयान में दिसंबर/जनवरी माह में भेजे जाते हैं। अभियान दल के दो घटक हैं, अर्थात् ग्रीष्मकालीन और शीतकालीन। ग्रीष्मकालीन दल वैज्ञानिक कार्यकलाप करेगा और शीतकालीन दल को वहां छोड़कर अगले वर्ष मार्च महीने में लौट आएगा। तथापि, शीतकालीन दल विभिन्न वैज्ञानिक प्रयोग करने के लिए भारतीय अंटार्कटिक केन्द्र "मैत्री" में रहेगा और वापस मुख्य भूमि में तभी

†सभा में यह प्रश्न श्री प्यारे लाल खंडेलवाल द्वारा पूछा गया।